

Snavelly's Ford, House  
Abtietam National Battlefield  
Sharpsburg Vicinity  
Washington County  
Maryland

HABS NO. MD-963

HABS  
MD,  
22-SHARPS,  
35-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SNAVELY'S FORD HOUSE

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Location: Below the Burnside Bridge on the Antietam, Antietam National Battlefield Park, Sharpsburg Vicinity, Washington County, Maryland

Significance: This house is most significant for its history both prior to and during the Civil War Battle of Antietam.

Description: The Snavely's Ford House is constructed in two connected sections. The larger is a two-story, two-bay log dwelling with a high stone foundation. This foundation extends beyond the house to form the floor of a shed roof porch extending along the east elevation of the log house and linking it to the second stone structure. A front-gabled steeply pitched roof covers the house with a centered interior stone chimney. A one-and-one-half-story two-bay stone structure is attached to the log building by a frame one-story addition which has raised the height of the stone building. The stone section is covered by a side-gabled roof and has a massive exterior stone chimney in the east gable end.

History: Before the war, Belinda Springs, as the location was then called, was a regionally well-known health spa. Developed by Jacob Gardenhour in the 1820s, it is believed that the name was given in honor of his wife. There was a large complex of buildings where many visitors came to stay and take the cure. In 1832, a cholera epidemic broke out among Irish workers on the nearby C&O Canal and Belinda Springs was closed for good. Although it is believed that the original log structure was built in the early nineteenth century, its exact date is unknown. It is possible that it was built as a house prior to the commercial development of Belinda Springs. It is further possible that Gardenhour built the structure in the 1820s as a hotel for the resort. During the Battle of Antietam, the Snavely family owned Belinda Springs, and it was near Snavely's Ford where Rodman's command crossed the Antietam to outflank the impasse at the Burnside Bridge. Rodman was mortally wounded in this segment of the battle.

Sources: Antietam National Battlefield Site, National Register of Historic Places, nomination form, 1982

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Belinda Springs Farm, Maryland Historical Trust  
Inventory Form for State Historic Sites Survey

Historian: Martha Wagner  
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